Kunar Emergency Relief

Introduction:

The severe earthquake that shook both Afghanistan and Pakistan on 01/02/91 added another catastrophe to the ill fated people of Afghanistan. Kunar is one of the worst affected provinces, where a considerable number of families have had even more problems added to their already difficult living conditions.

Being aware of the sufferings of the Afghan population the Norwegian Committee for Afghanistan was among those humanitarian agencies that extended emergency relief to the Province of Kunar.

Plan and Strategy:

As decided at the ACBAR Kunar Co-ordination meeting, all emergency programs should be co-ordinated through UNOCA. It was also stated that UNOCA should utilise the network of MADERA which is well established with several field stations throughout the province. Finally, it was made quite clear in the meeting, that no agency or organisation must at any time give support or otherwise launch projects in co-operation with single commanders, parties or shuras in Kunar.
Thus the NCA launched its plan in co-operation with MADERA. A joint team of 12 staff members of both organizations was sent in, together with a relief package to the area. The relief package consisted of:

No.	Particular	Quantity
1	Tent	100 Nos
2	Mattress	100 "
3	Pillow	500 "
4	Blanket	500 "
5	Rice	100 Sacks (50 Kg)
6	Ghee	100 Tins (5 Kg)
7	Sugar	100 Bags (5 Kg)
8	Tea	100 Bags (1 Kg)
9	Salt	100 Bags (5 Kg)

Accompanying the relief package, the team left Peshawar on 15/02/19. Due to heavy snow the trucks could not pass the Nowa Pass. The head of the team together with some members went to the UNOCA office at Chagha Seray and met with Abdul Haq Zia of WFP and informed each other of their plans respectively. On 18/02 they got news about problems created over the distribution of UN goods through Shura in Barikot.

Since Barikot was one of the targets of the mission. The team sent two persons to Barikot to see the situation. They met with Abdullah Khan of Ittehad-e-Islami. Abdullah Khan informed the team of the situation and warned them, that armed persons were planning to hijack the NCA supplies on their way to Barikot, because they were not satisfied with the distribution of UN goods by the Barikot Shura. Together with Abdulah Khan the team met the Shura which was responsible for distribution of the UN goods. Ghazi Khan a member of the Shura told the NCA team that the UN supplies were sufficient for the area.

Considering the above mentioned points (risks and sufficient supplies) the NCA team decided to change the distribution point to Asmar. At the same time agreement was reached with the Barikot Shura, that Nisha Gam village which was supposed to be covered by UN goods through the same Shura, should be supplied through Asmar.

The NCA mission reached Asmar after four days, and the supplies were stored at MADERA's veterinary clinic. Before the distribution the joint team of NCA-MADERA surveyed the following 28 villages in order to make a list of the earthquake victims of the villages.

Villages Surveyed : Asmar, Zol Asmar, Jaja, Sher Kasy, Tangi, Siri, Spingay, Bar Dangam, Lar Dangam, Cheri, Nesheen Kolk, Hwosia, Sawan, Khropaty, Karkol, Dobandee, Sal Khol, Mareet, Shangar, Owz Bagh, Bar Kam, Jalalah, Draien, Nisha Gam and Kassa Gal.

In order to benefit the entire 317 listed families the supplies were divided into three categories A, B and C according to their needs.

Group A was consisting of :

Item	Quantity
Tent	One
Mattress	"
Pillow	"
Blanket	"

Group B was consisting of:

Item	Quantity
Rice	One Sack (50 Kg)
Ghee	One Tin (5 Kg)
Sugar	One Bag (5 Kg)
Mattress	Single
Pillow	"
Blanket	"

Group C was consisting of:

Item	Quantity
Tea	One Bag (1 Kg)
Salt	One Bag (5 Kg)
Mattress	3
Pillow	"
Blanket	"

It is to be said that the entire 317 surveyed families were not equally effected by the earthquake. A limited number were suffering more from the generally deranged economy of the area. To these families even nominal problems resulting from any incident (like an earthquake) could destroy their economy completely, therefore these families were also given some support.

The priority in dividing the aid was given to those families who's houses had been destroyed, livestock killed or other major loss had been inflicted on them by the earthquake.

Based on the above categories, the aid was divided to the enlisted families. Categories A & B were allocated to those families who had been seriously affected, and category C was allocated to the poor families.

Risk and Controversy:

The Salafi in charge of the Asmar district sent a letter on 20/02 1991 to the NCA mission, asking for the delivery of the package to them and they would take charge of the dividing. In that letter they've reasoned that the UN had just some days before delivered the supply to the Shura. Later the team was invited to the Shura of Asmar which comprises eight parties: Jaimat-e-Islami, Hezb-e-Islami (Khales) Hezb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar), Salafi, Ittehad-e-Islami, Harakat, NIFA and ANLF.

The Shura called an emergency meeting to discuss the distribution of the NCA's emergency package. Shura was demanding the delivery of the package to them. As the NCA-MADERA team was determined to do the distribution by themselves, the issue became very complicated and the controversy continued for two days. Their main point was based on the UN deal with them. Stating that UN being a great international organisation, had trusted them (the Shura), why can't NCA do the same? After two days of hard arguments, the Asmar Shura agreed to:

a) Supervise the distribution done by NCA-MADERA team.

b) Receive a small part of the supplies, which were to be divided among the Shura members.

c) After distribution the remainder of the supplies should be given to the Shura members for them to distribute to people who had not received any aid.

Conclusion.

The NCA, in co-operation with MADERA, has completed a emergency relief mission following the recent earthquake in the Province of Kunar in Eastern Afghanistan. The mission was a success in the respect that upon evaluation, all support was found to have been distributed according to most of the principles and guidelines drawn up before the mission's departure.
*The needs of support was assessed by the NCA/MADERA staff itself through their own surveys.
*The support was distributed by the NCA/MADERA staff directly to the people found needing it, according to the needs of the individual family as established by the NCA/MADERA staff.
*Both surveys and distribution were conducted without being influenced by local commanders or Shuras.

It is considered that in the instances where principles and guidelines were not followed, the situation was so different from what could have been anticipated that independent action from the project co-ordinator in the field was justifiable. This relates to the following instances:

1). Failing to co-operate with UN staff in Barikot and Asmar. The reason for this was that no UN staff was present on location on the arrival of the NCA staff.

2). Abandoning Barikot as main point of distribution of relief support in Northern Kunar. This was found necessary in view of the difficult security situation.

Follow-up.
A follow-up of the post-earth-quake situation in the province of Kunar has been considered by the NCA and decided against.
The reports of the joint NCA-MADERA team indicates a need for a reconstruction programme in Kunar following the earth-quake. Furthermore, the funding of such a programme appears to be relatively easy for the NCA to secure. Still, in view of the unstable political situation following the United Nation's actions in the Asmar and Barikot areas, the NCA has decided against engaging in such a programme for the time being.

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